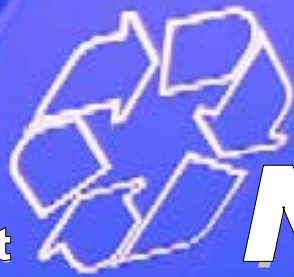


Fran Pavley

Assemblymember, 41st District



NEWS

A MONTHLY ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER TO THE 41st ASSEMBLY DISTRICT
(Including Agoura Hills, Calabasas, Encino, Malibu, Hidden Hills, Lake Sherwood, Oak Park, Pacific Palisades, Port Hueneme, South Oxnard, Santa Monica, Tarzana, Topanga, Westlake Village, and Woodland Hills.)

MARCH 2006 EDITION

"The Future of Alternative Fuels in California"

This week I chaired an important and well attended meeting of the *Assembly Select Committee on Air and Water Quality* on the subject of the future of alternative fuels in California. As recent price spikes in gasoline show, it is increasingly risky to have one single commodity so dominate our fuel needs.

The increased price of fuel is the consequence of rising worldwide demand, regional instability, and distribution issues, among other things, and these issues are not going to go away. In addition, petroleum-based fuels are major sources of carbon dioxide, the major greenhouse gas implicated in climate change.

In California, motor vehicles running on gasoline and diesel are principal emitters of the state's global warming pollution, air toxics, air criteria pollutants and pollutants that seep into our water supplies.

But we do have choices. Natural gas, flex-fuel vehicles, high-blend ethanol (E-85), plug-in hybrids, biodiesel, propane, electricity, biomass, hybrids, and hydrogen are all viable fuels that we can use in our vehicles and that have the potential to considerably reduce the environmental impacts of petroleum use, and to help our state attain its air and water quality goals. And there are significant economic benefits for California in becoming an alternative fuels leader.

Last year I authored, and the Governor signed AB 1007, requiring the California Energy Commission and the California Air Resources Board to develop a plan for increasing the use of alternative fuels to reduce air pollution and greenhouse gases from motor vehicles and reduce the state's dependence on petroleum.

The goal of this week's Select Committee hearing was to collect information on how the State of California can develop policies and a plan for diversifying its transportation fuel supply in order to reduce oil dependency and air pollution.

A distinguished panel of expert witnesses provided a summary of the development of various fuels and transportation technologies that will reduce air pollution and greenhouse gases as well as our dependence on petroleum. And we heard about potential economic benefits to the state from diversifying our fuels supply and creating alternative fuel industries.

An exciting addition to our hearing were several members of the United Kingdom Parliament, joining California's legislators in the discussion. We share the mutual goal of creating a clean, secure energy future.



Prof. Daniel Kammen and Assemblymember Pavley

Infrastructure “Mega-Bond” -- Maybe November?

In spite of hundreds of hours of good faith effort on the part of many legislators, we were not able to negotiate a deal on the proposed Mega-Bond in time to meet the deadline to place it on the June ballot. For those of you who have been following this two-month effort, the Governor’s ambitious Strategic Growth Plan was scaled back and modified to address fiscal concerns and other priorities.

Approximately \$40 billion for new school and college construction and modernization, roads and transit, air quality, state parks deferred maintenance, water supply and quality, and money for resource protection for our state agencies and conservancies (including \$70 million for the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy) made the final cut. Senate and Assembly Democratic leaders and, according to reliable reports, the Governor all agreed to this final bond package. There was also demonstrated need to provide money to do seismic retrofits of our hospitals and to build or improve our courts.

As you know, California needs a 2/3 vote of the Legislature to pass a budget or place a measure on the ballot, which places tremendous power in the hands of the minority. Unfortunately, neither the Assembly, Senate, nor the Governor could convince the two Republicans in the Senate and six Republicans in the Assembly required to reach 2/3 for this ambitious, but much needed, investment in our state’s infrastructure.

Prior to the March 15 deadline, the Assembly voted overwhelmingly to place just the education and levee repair portions of the bond package on the June ballot. The Senate appropriated \$1 billion to repair our state levees. It’s important to note that approximately 400,000 Californians live in subdivisions that are below levees (shades of Katrina), and most of us in Southern California rely on the antiquated and poorly-constructed levee system for our water. Again, it is unfortunate that neither the Assembly nor the Senate actions passed in the other house.

Speaking to several of my Republican colleagues, and, frankly, some of my Central Valley Democratic colleagues, they had several problems with the bond:

1. More money for surface water storage systems (principally new dams);
2. Too much money for Los Angeles region;
3. “Relaxation” of some review currently required by the California Environmental Quality Act for levee repair and a project to expand Highway 99;
4. Not enough time to negotiate other options;
5. A portion of the bidding for road and transit projects to be done by “design-build,” which means more contracting out to private companies;
6. A guarantee that Prop. 42 funding (for transportation) from gasoline taxes can never be suspended during a budget crisis;
7. And a general scale-back of the magnitude of the bond itself including reducing or eliminating money for resources, parks, air and water quality programs, transit, and others.

We, as a state, have not been able to keep pace with our growing population. Former Governor Pat Brown’s huge investment in schools, colleges, roads, and our state water project was put on the ballot in the 1960s, prior to the change in California requiring a 2/3 vote of the Legislature. **Maybe in November...**



Car Seat Inspections

On Saturday, March 18, I was pleased to join the California Highway Patrol and L.A. County Sheriff’s Department at a car seat safety inspection. ***Nearly 73% of child safety restraint systems are misused.*** This includes car seats that are installed improperly, which means unsafely. If your child is not yet age six or weighs less than 60 lbs., he or she must be restrained in a car seat in the back seat of your car. To get a free inspection of your car seat, you can contact your local CHP office.

Santa Monica Librarian 41st AD “Woman of the Year”

Every year, the California Legislative Women’s Caucus sponsors its “Woman of the Year” celebration. This is our opportunity as legislators to select an outstanding woman in our district and to formally honor her contributions to the community.

I was delighted this year to recognize **Sylvia Anderle**, a librarian at the Fairview Branch Library in Santa Monica. Over the past 11 years, Sylvia has helped some 500 Spanish-speaking children with English literacy through a wonderful summer reading program she developed. As the daughter of Cuban immigrants, she saw how language and other barriers can hold back children from becoming familiar with libraries and what they can offer. When informed that she would be my “Woman of the Year,” Sylvia was nearly speechless, and could only respond that “I do it because I love it.”

Her self-effacing nature, however, was already challenged previously, when the prestigious *New York Times* presented Sylvia with their “Outstanding Public Service” award. Sylvia was one of only 27 librarians so honored, from a field of over 1,200 nominees nationwide.

On Monday, March 20, Sylvia joined the other “Women of the Year” in a beautiful presentation ceremony on the Assembly floor. First Lady Maria Shriver spoke to them, thanking them for their outstanding accomplishments, and a reception followed at the State History Museum.

It has been a privilege over the past six years to recognize six outstanding women in the 41st AD.



Assemblymember Fran Pavley with Woman of the Year, Sylvia Anderle

- In 2001, it was **Lila Aurich**, director of Haven Hills, a domestic violence shelter in the San Fernando Valley.
- In 2002 I recognized **Pam Brady**, whose long community involvement includes the Santa Monica/Malibu School Board, the California State PTA, and the Malibu Chamber of Commerce.
- In 2003, it was **Elizabeth Morosco**, who worked for 20 years managing the Guide Dogs for the Blind facility in Topanga.
- In 2004 I honored Woodland Hills resident **Jo Kitz**, who is working on environmental education and native plant preservation with the Mountains Restoration Trust.
- And in 2005 it was **Suzanne Verge**, a moving force with the Million Mom March against gun violence.

New PPIC Survey Confirms that the Color Of California's Voters is "Green"

A new survey by the nonpartisan Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) entitled "Californians and the Environment" was released last month. In looking at how Californians view coastal concerns, the survey found that "an impressive nine in 10 Californians say the quality of the beach and ocean is just as important to them personally as well as for the overall quality of life and economy in the state." Since the 41st Assembly District is bounded on the west by 70 miles of some of the most beautiful coast in the U.S., this finding did not surprise me.

"Love Affair with the Beach Unites Parties"

They went on to note that "there is unusual partisan harmony on every environmental policy question asked in the survey -- except offshore oil drilling. Large majorities in all parties favor policies that protect the state's coastal environment -- even if it means less access to some areas and activities, greater restrictions on fishing, and higher fees or taxes." On this latter issue of the costs of protecting the coast, the support was still high -- 80% among Democrats, 73% among independents, and 68% among Republicans. Support was similarly high when people were asked about restricting development along the coast, protecting wetlands and habitats, and creating more marine reserves that are off-limits to fishing. Unfortunately, the partisan lines are much harder in the Legislature than this survey reflects when they asked the people we, as legislators, represent.

Offshore Oil Drilling an Exception

Offshore oil drilling is highly controversial and did show a partisan divide, however. It is strongly opposed by 64% of all state residents, which is an increase from the level of opposition in the surveys of the past three years. 80% of Democrats and 69% of independents opposed offshore oil drilling, but only 46% of Republicans were opposed. A bare majority of Republicans (51%) favor more offshore drilling.

These PPIC surveys are always interesting. You can read the entire survey report online at www.ppic.org.



Sustainable41

My honoree this month for my Sustainable41 business award is the Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf in Malibu. In addition to being a small business that provides a wonderful service to the Malibu community, Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf is certified by the "Green Restaurant Association." Among the environmentally-friendly practices that they have voluntarily incorporated into their

business is the use of biodegradable and chlorine-free materials and an excellent recycling program. It was a pleasure for me to meet with Donna Drexler, the store manager and to present her with my Sustainable41 award as a token of my appreciation for choosing to do business in such a responsible manner.

Elections Upcoming, and Voting Systems Remain in Question

With memories of the infamous "hanging chads" of 2000 still fresh, and the movement toward electronic voting machines growing across the country, there is still no consensus on a voting system that is totally tamper-proof, technologically 100% reliable, and that can guarantee that every vote cast is accurately recorded and counted. Following the many questions over the controversial 2000 vote count, Congress passed the *Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA)*, which was intended to phase out punch cards and other systems that had proven to be problematic in 2000. All states were to come into compliance by January 1, 2006.

Attention shifted to electronic voting systems, including touchscreen voting machines with optical scanners. Counties made various decisions on which manufacturer's system they preferred, but no system could be used until certified by the Secretary of State. And in 2004, the Legislature passed SB 1438, which required that all electronic voting machines provide a voter-verified paper trail effective with the June 2006 primary election. It passed 73-0.

Although HAVA required compliance by January 1, 2006, roughly half the states still are not. Last month, Secretary of State Bruce McPherson recertified the controversial Diebold Election System for use in California, despite findings by some computer scientists that some Diebold systems have shown failure rates of up to 20%. Finding the stated risks "manageable" and that they could be mitigated, Secretary McPherson decided to go forward with Diebold. Other systems are still in the process. However, studies of various electronic voting machines over the past 10 years, have revealed machine problems (ex., votes not recorded or lost), legal problems (ex., illegal changes in scanner software, use of uncertified software, lack of security), counting problems (ex., absentee or early voting ballots not counted or counted inaccurately, secret ballots not secret, high rate of under-votes), and accessibility and supply problems (ex., lack of access for blind or disabled voters, no machines in the precinct.)

All of these problems, which are only representative, are serious and alarming. The public must feel confident that every vote counts and has been counted, and that high-tech equipment like optical scan cards and other electronic technology cannot be manipulated. I have heard from several constituents that we should return to hand-counted paper ballots entirely, and reject electronic voting, noting that paper ballots can be counted in a public process, and can be preserved for recounts and verification, removing some of the risks inherent in computerized electronically-stored data.

On March 21, the nonprofit group Voter Action filed a lawsuit in San Francisco Superior Court against Secretary of State McPherson, asking the court to reverse his decision to recertify the Diebold TSx electronic voting machine for use in California. Senator Debra Bowen, chair of the Senate Elections, Reapportionment and Constitutional Amendments Committee still contends that the Diebold machines fail to comply with the law. I will be updating you in upcoming newsletters as this lawsuit moves forward.

Bits 'n' Pieces

- 41st AD School Wins State Academic Decathlon

Academic decathlon teams have been competing across California, and 55 teams headed for the state competition in Los Angeles on March 17-18. It's a source of pride for me to have three teams from schools that serve the 41st AD competing at the state level this year - **Palisades Charter High School**, in Pacific Palisades, **El Camino Real High School** and **William Howard Taft High School**, in Woodland Hills. Just competing at the state level is a great honor since only 55 of the 428 teams that began in the county and regional competitions have progressed.

On Sunday, Taft won the California Academic Decathlon!...

beating the other 54 teams over the two-day weekend competition. Taft is already a two-time national champion, and is now headed once again to the U.S. Academic Decathlon competition in Texas at the end of April. California has placed first or second in every year except one since the U.S. Academic Decathlon competition began in 1982. I'm just thrilled to see this kind of academic excellence and enthusiasm coming from a 41st AD school, and I send my warmest congratulations to the Taft students and their outstanding teachers and coaches on this remarkable accomplishment.



- Topanga Coalition for Emergency Preparedness (T-CEP)

Topanga, tucked in a beautiful canyon in the Santa Monica Mountains, is also marked by periodic natural disasters, including wildfires and floods. But they have become a model of how to be prepared when disaster strikes, including the founding of T-CEP. I enjoyed joining in honoring Gabrielle Lamirand earlier this month, T-CEP "Volunteer of the Year" and one of their founding members. Topanga has also prepared "The Topanga Disaster Survival Guide," which is the most comprehensive, user-friendly and entertaining guide I've seen on what to do both proactively, and when the worst happens.

More Bits 'n' Pieces

- Santa Monica Senior Scam Stopper Workshop

This past weekend I hosted an informative workshop for seniors on things seniors should be alert to that may be scams designed to defraud them. Representatives from the Contractors State License Board, the Santa Monica City Attorney's Office, the Federal Trade Commission, the Department of Insurance, the AARP and the WISE Senior Services all spoke to the group. Helpful brochures were available for people to take home and review. A show of hands when I have previously held workshops on either scams or identify theft always reveal the extent of the problem and the need to people to be proactive in protecting themselves.

- New Fire Station opens in Encino

This month L.A. City Fire Station 83 opened in Encino. It was estimated that as many as 4,000 people may have been in attendance. Mark Nagales, my newest Field Representative, joined them and expressed not just my congratulations on this new station, but added my special thanks to the entire L.A. Fire Department for their extraordinary response during the Topanga Fires last October.



Hon. Greig Smith, Hon Jack Weiss, Hon Antonio Villariagosa, Fire Chief Bill Bammatre, Fire Commissioner Jill Furillo, Mark Nagales, Enginerr Gary Lee Moore.

- Earth Day Mobile District Office

If you can, please stop by and say hello when I join the Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life of Southern California (CoeJISC) at their Earth Day booth at the "Earth Day Los Angeles Festival." It will be held on the Third Street Promenade in Santa Monica on Saturday, April 15, from 10:00 a.m. to noon. Plan to spend a few hours celebrating Earth Day, and enjoying all the wonderful displays, stores and restaurants along the Promenade. The festival will continue until 7:00 p.m.



Dr. Richard R. Rush, Assembly Member Fran Pavley, Yvette Bocz, Hank, Lacayo, Mario "Marty" de los Cobos, Tania Garcia, Caron Oberg, Lori Macdonald, Mike Saliba

- Cal State Channel Islands visits the Capitol

I always enjoy it so much when people from the district come and visit our beautiful state capitol. This month included Cal State Channels Islands President Richard Rush, Hank Lacayo, Marty de los Cobos, Tania Garcia, Mike Saliba, Yvette Bocz and Lori Macdonald.

Assemblymember Pavley's Committee Assignments

Budget Committee
Education Committee
Transportation Committee
Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee

Chair, Budget Subcommittee #3 on Resources
Chair, Select Committee on Air and Water Quality
Select Committee on Runaway Production
Select Committee on Ports
Select Committee on Title IX
Joint Committee on Emergency Services and Homeland Security

Legislative Advisory Committee – Wildlife Conservation Board
Legislative Advisory Committee – California Coastal Conservancy
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Board
Member, Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission
Member, Commission on the Status of Women

HOW TO REACH ME:

District Office:
6355 Topanga Canyon Blvd., Suite 205
Woodland Hills, CA 91367
Phones: (818) 596-4141 • (805) 644-4141 • (310) 395-3414
Fax: (818) 596-4150

Capitol Office:
State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0041
Phone: (916) 319-2041
Fax: (916) 319-2141

E-mail: assemblymember.pavley@assembly.ca.gov
Or visit my website at www.assembly.ca.gov

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